



PRESS STATEMENT

Reactions to the ILO World Employment and Social Outlook Trends 2023: African workers make a renewed call on the need and urgency to strengthen African Economies

The African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa: <https://www.ituc-africa.org/>) commends the ILO for its ongoing efforts in monitoring and analysing trends in employment, social and economic conditions globally. We welcome the findings presented in the Trends 2023 report as a valuable resource for understanding the challenges and opportunities facing the global workforce, specifically for Africa – in this instance.

The report justifies our call for a New Social Contract for the global economy where global prosperity continues to grow. Still, the distribution arrangements continue to be skewed against the majority of the people. It is unacceptable when those who create wealth are always given the short end of the stick whilst a tiny minority appropriates the economic gains. Indeed, the report aligns with the need to rethink the ideals of fairness, inclusion and equality at the heart of stability. ITUC-Africa will continue to support and rally stakeholders to take the call for a Global Coalition on Social Justice seriously.

Based on the pieces of evidence of the report, our organisation, the ITUC Africa, is compelled to renew its call on the African governments to strengthen domestic economies through home-grown pragmatic and imaginative initiatives to raise productivity and living standards undertaken inclusively.

In reviewing the report, ITUC-Africa recognises the importance of addressing critical issues highlighted by the ILO affecting employment and social conditions in Africa.

1. ITUC Africa appreciates the emphasis on promoting decent work and the need for strengthened social protection measures. These aspects are fundamental to ensuring the well-being and dignity of workers.
2. The report's insights into skills development and job creation align with ITUC-Africa's commitment to empowering workers through advocacy for fair wages, improved working conditions, and enhanced employability and productivity, especially in the era of Industry 4.0.

3. ITUC Africa echoes the importance of fostering inclusive economic policies, as highlighted in the report. Collaboration between stakeholders, including trade unions, is vital to developing alternative solutions prioritising equitable economic opportunity distribution and social justice.
4. ITUC Africa acknowledges the challenges posed by the informal economy, and we share the ILO's concern for the need to address job insecurity, lack of social protection, and exploitation prevalent in informal work arrangements, which is skewed more against women. We are committed to further our advocacy for and collaboration in efforts to formalise the informal economy through friendly business registration policies, enterprise support and incubation schemes, skills development (Technical, Vocational Education and Training -TVET, and apprenticeship programmes), social protection provisions and enabling civil liberties preservation ecosystems.
5. ITUC Africa recognises the significance of global collaborations, and we stand ready to contribute to initiatives that promote sustainable development, social dialogue, and the well-being of workers across the African continent.
6. The correlation between low climate change resilience and high rates of informal employment underscores the urgency of addressing both challenges simultaneously.
7. We want to reiterate that preserving the space, promoting the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining, and providing a safe and secure working environment are essential to driving and achieving a robust and productive economy.

ITUC-Africa urgently calls on African governments, international organisations, and stakeholders to prioritise inclusive and sustainable economic recovery, invest in quality job creation, and address vulnerabilities exacerbated by the climate crisis. Decent work, social protection, and climate resilience must be at the forefront of policy agendas to build a more equitable and sustainable future for all Africans.

In Solidarity!



Akhator Joel ODIGIE
General Secretary, ITUC-Africa